

THE GIVVER

Saturday, June 23, 1855



THE REV. W. BROCK, D.D.

IN the immediate neighbourhood of New Oxford Street stands an elegant ecclesiastical edifice belonging to the Baptists. The very position must surely be a coveted one, for no less than three

churches stand side by side; the central one—by far the most church-like in its appearance—is that wherein Dr. Brock preaches and presides. Ecclesiastical architecture is in these days the appanage of

no one particular section of the Church of Christ. It is commonly said that, to see a man as he is, you must see him at home—and this is true ecclesiastically as well as socially. To get a fair view of the characteristics of Dr. Brock you must go to Bloomsbury Chapel some Sunday morning or evening. It will not be very easy to get a seat; but, having got one, you will be sure to get a sermon. Yes, a sermon; not an elaborate sort of essay read with punctilious precision or affected mannerism, but a sermon full of sound sense and of spiritual power and purpose—a sermon that will be calculated to make you wiser and better—a sermon most thoroughly evangelical and most vigorously practical. You will hear the ring of manly sincerity in the preacher's words, and the carefulness of a thoughtful exegesis in the teacher's expositions. You will see the whole man under the influence of his sacred theme, and mark that his royal aim is to preach Christ. You will feel the fire of his holy eloquence rousing you to feeling and to action. Emerson speaks of sitting in a church one Sunday in winter time: the preacher was spectral, the snow-storm was real. "If he had ever lived and acted, we were none the wiser for it." It is never so at Bloomsbury. Dr. Brock seems to combine in himself many opposites. He is like Luther in his stern denunciations of what is hollow, hypocritical, and time-serving, and, like him, he seems to have a latent tenderness of heart which often makes the appeals at the close of his sermons touching in the extreme. We have heard recently of a machine which can be so worked as gently to break the shell of an egg, and to smash to fragments the hardest block of granite. It is something to have the power, in a moral sense, which can touch the heart with an angel finger of love, and smite the conscience as with the arm of iron. There coexists also in Dr. Brock the power to be completely catholic with the most Knox-like conscientiousness. We see men sometimes on platforms who, in their expressions of desire for Christian unity and fellowship, make light of those principles which, in other places and at other times, they profess to hold dear. There is a suavity of speech and manner about them which seem put on, like new kid gloves, for special occasions. They are one with everybody, their differences are nought, their agreements are all in all. This kind of speechifying has in it an insincerity which is, we believe, as damaging to the speaker as it is nauseous to the hearer. Now, Dr. Brock is a Nonconformist and a Baptist—not, indeed, one inch a bigot, but a very large-hearted and liberal man. At the same time he is thoroughly manly. He speaks what is in him at all times, and never for a moment trims his sails of speech to catch a breeze of popular favour. He seems to solve the problem, how it is possible to have thorough catholic

unity with distinctiveness of ecclesiasticism and diversity of worship. When the late lamented Bishop Villiers was rector of St. George's, Bloomsbury, Dr. Brock was his friend and fellow-helper in every good work, and most noble words did Bishop Villiers speak concerning him. But Dr. Brock had never put himself in the position of being patronised. He held firmly, defended strongly, and stated clearly his own Nonconformist position and principles. We of this generation have to learn to honour and love each other, not by a timid withdrawing, or apologising in any way for what we believe to be true, but by a frank and manly respect for each other's differences of opinion.

Dr. Brock was for some time settled at Norwich, where he earned the esteem and love of all good men. He removed to London to take charge of, or, perhaps, we should rather say, to gather together, the present Church at Bloomsbury. The elegant and spacious structure—as the magazines of that day say, speaking of his chapel—was crowded on the 5th of December, 1849, with a most respectable congregation. Mr. Brock commenced the service, and Dr. Harris, Principal of Cheshunt College, preached from—"The kingdom of God is not in word, but in power." Dr. Price, Mr. Brock's first pastor, was present. Sir Morton Peto—plain Mr. Peto then—had, with great munificence, been the subscriber of several thousands of pounds to the building of the chapel, and was referred to in eloquent terms on the opening day as the noble benefactor of his denomination. Since that inaugural day, with unabated success, Dr. Brock has continued to preach within its walls, and his chapel is a kind of West-End cathedral for the May sermons and gatherings of his own denomination. If, however, he has been the beloved, honoured, and successful pastor of his own flock, he has been in labours most abundant everywhere. As a lecturer in Exeter Hall, to young men, and a preacher in the provinces, he is everywhere known and deservedly popular, not only amongst the Baptists, but in Congregational and other circles of the Christian world.

It is perfectly true that there are no bishops in the ecclesiastical government of any non-Episcopal bodies, but in all denominations there are great and good men who are in some sort bishops elect—their brethren look up to them for counsel and comfort, and the churches regard their recommendations as having very strong apostolic weight. Such men are Thomas Binney and William Brock. We have spoken of the subject of this article as Doctor, although he has only recently been honoured with the degree. Assuredly he deserves it; and he has weight enough of mind and character to wear it well. Dr. Brock is in appearance what a French critic would call *magnifique*. He is very

broad, and altogether massive; but then, with his fine head and his tall figure, he has a commanding presence, and does not look other than a well-built man: indeed, his very physique aids the delivery of his strong and manly Saxon speech.

Long may he be spared to his denomination and to the Church at large. Safely may he be permitted to return from the American shores he is visiting now, not one whit the less a Britisher from his visit to the Yankee-land.

Dr. Brock has several times appeared in print—once in connection with the late lamented General Havelock, whose memoirs he somewhat hurriedly prepared. He has also contributed an admirable life of John Bunyan to the edition of the "Pilgrim's Progress," issued by Messrs. Cassell, Petter, and Galpin, which life, we have no doubt, has been perused by most of our readers. We do not think his literary efforts have hindered his reputation. These works are written in good Saxon; the thought in them is sterling, and the style is simple and strong; but, for all that, the pulpit is his place of power. Yes, the pulpit, even before the platform. He shines in both, but never so much as in the pulpit, and that pulpit his own.

Like Thomas Binney, he can say strong things and stern things. We like him none the less for that. The *ex-à-cologne* of speech is very good; but we believe there is a use for gall, and if it can now and then be put into the cup of pretentiousness and conceit, doubtless it does good, and he is a benefactor who does it.

That Dr Brock, however, is amiable, magnanimous, and generous, those who know him best well can testify. He is free from the vices of sneering and satirising—vices which have aforetime marred

the influence of ministers as well as other men. His face in this respect answers to his character, and his courteous, gentlemanly bearing wins him admiration at once. He is another instance of the fact that to be strong-minded it is not necessary to be vulgarly bluff, or to be contemptuously careless of other people's feelings.

Multitudes of young people gather themselves together under his ministry, and many ministering in the Church of Christ owe to him their first impressions of religious truth. It would be impossible to say how many own him as their father in the Gospel. In preparing this paper, we have attempted no critical delineation of his mental and moral constitution. We have met with such sketches of great preachers in notices and volumes, which are as impertinent to the subjects of the sketches as they are evidences of most self-contented conceit in the writers of them. They remind us of the familiar lines—

"One's too careless, another's too correct;
All save our own sweet selves have some defect."

All we have essayed to do is to place beneath our portrait of Dr. Brock some remarks indicative of our high appreciation of his character and position, and to render our humble meed of gratitude to God that in all branches of the one catholic Church there are to be found such men as Thomas Binney, whose portrait we presented some numbers back, and William Brock, whose likeness we now place upon the page. We are not without occasion to believe that multitudes in the provinces, and in distant places, will thank us for giving them a likeness of one whom they have often heard with admiration, and learned to regard with affection and respect.

A RUN-AND-READ RAMBLE TO ROME.

BY OUR OWN CONTINENTAL CORRESPONDENT.

CHAPTER VIII.

THROUGH THE APENNINES.



OUR stay in Turin was more brief than I could have wished it. I could well have spent many days, instead of few in it. But our journey is forward still, and we have many places to visit yet; so we must begone. Our next sojourn is to be at Florence. Accordingly, we book ourselves and baggage (the latter a very expensive travelling companion on the Italian railways), and take our places for the fair City of Flowers, the present capital of the Kingdom of Italy—Florence, or, as the Italians call it, Firenze. Our route lies through many interesting scenes and stages. At starting,

we take our course due east, for Alessandria, a strongly fortified town, which once played an important part in the history of the First Napoleon, who fought (A.D. 1800) one of his most celebrated battles here, on the plains of Marengo, distant two miles from the town. A museum is erected on the plain, containing a large collection of objects of interest found on the battle-field. Austria had well-nigh triumphed that day, but the French reserves, brought up by Desaix in the course of the afternoon, turned the tide of victory full into the hands of Napoleon. We also touched at Piacenza, Parma, and Modena. From Modena we proceed to Bologna, a city of churches, convents, and stately towers; two of the last named are leaning towers. Here the Apennine range first appears; Bologna lies at

its foot; and now, from this point we have to pass through a strangely diversified country, which cannot be described with pen and ink, but must be seen in order to be appreciated.

I have seen many mountain ranges, many lovely valleys, many flowing rivers, but here I seem to see every possible variety of landscape. It is commonly said that railways spoil the interest of travel, by intercepting the view, and by whisking one so quickly through and past the objects of interest as to render them indistinct or invisible. Now, this cannot be said of the Apennine railway. These continental trains never go too fast at any time; and on this journey we went at a very conveniently slow pace through the most interesting parts. Besides, the chief beauty of this line is, that the traveller is enabled to see all sorts of views of the mountain range. Now we are passing through a lovely valley, with the mountain heights rising in grand and lofty masses on either side; now we plunge with a shrill whistle through a long tunnel; emerging from this, we strike upon a scene, above, below, around, that baffles description; and in a moment or two, we see vast depths below us, as though we were at the mountain-top. The tunnels that have been bored through these mighty hills are many in number; some scores of them intervene between Bologna and Pistoia. The wide landscapes, the snow-clad heights, the deep valleys, the rushing cataracts, the descending mountain streams and rivers, the patches of cultivation, the wild and barren slopes—all these are thrown in at intervals on this very delightful journey; and there goes the "fire-horse," human science subduing the earth, and cutting its way through the everlasting hills!

This diversity of scenery, now at one side, now at another, occupied the attention of our party most intensely all that afternoon. At intervals different expedients would be resorted to for the purpose of otherwise spending the time. For instance, in one carriage some of our friends improvised a chess-board out of a section of a plaid shawl, and played a game at draughts, the pieces on either side being represented by French and Roman money. The time was also whiled away by parties joining together in singing, and at each station the matter became sufficiently amusing. From one carriage, in which some of our American friends were riding, might be heard the national Federal ode—"John Brown's body lies mouldering in the grave;" whereupon some of our English friends, if only to show that there are other songs in the world, would strike up the Confederate songs—"My Maryland," and "The Bonny Blue Flag." These reprisals would possibly have led to an open rupture some time ago, only we were just now all friends, and utterly indisposed for quarrels of any kind. Among our

American fellow-travellers we have one lady, who calls herself an "Abolitionist," another who says she is a "Republican," and another who chooses to be styled a "Democrat." To my ears all these titles sound awfully, and almost fill me with fear. We have also in our company a lady who may be regarded as the Miss Nightingale of the hospitals of the Northern armies. She is now married to one of the Army Medical Staff; and they are both a very great acquisition to our party. Taking everything into account, I must say that "John Brown's body" is the favourite, and so we go marching on!

Having been passing for some hours through the diversified scenery of the Apennines, through lovely valleys, dark tunnels, and steep precipices, we suddenly burst forth upon a sight that it was worth coming all the way to see. We emerged from a long tunnel, and found ourselves on a very lofty eminence, and spread out before us and beneath the mountain range was a vast low-land, extending miles upon miles, and in this valley, as though crouching at our feet, lay the city of Pistoia. There it lay far below, like a precious mosaic dropped from the mountain height, sublime in its humility. From the height we have now to wend and wind our way, as best we can, to the vale below. This is done by skirting the mountain with zig-zag lines. One of our party carries a pocket-compass, and he tells me that the index went three-fourths round the disc while passing through one of the tunnels—showing what a circuit even the tunnels take in order to accomplish the descent. Several very beautiful and picturesque viaducts spanned the gaps and gorges of the mountain; these we saw apparently near us, almost within reach, and yet it would be some twenty minutes before we could cross them, so circuitous was the route of the railway line. Still, however, on we went, the drags tightly on, and every minute more and more near to the foot of the hills. We stop at Pistoia for a few minutes, and thence we proceed on to Florence, where we propose to stay for some days.

CHAPTER IX.

FLORENCE.—GENERAL ASPECT; CHURCHES, ETC.

ARRIVING in Florence about eventide, we drove at once to the Hotel de New York, where we understood preparations were made to receive us. We found, however, that our party must be divided between that hotel and the Hotel Victoria. I was billeted on the latter, and felt quite at home under the sign of the queenly name. My first view of Florence surpassed my expectations. Night is not generally a favourable season for first impressions; but Florence need not be ashamed of her evening dress. The Arno is the glory of Florence, and the

glory is not hid under a bushel. I longed for every friend I have to be there, if only to see that noble sweep of river—the waters broad, full, impetuous, and the margin brilliantly lighted with a row of lamps on either side for considerably more than a mile, at one view, the vista bending into the form of almost a semicircle of illumination. The river is embanked on both sides with a noble strada, affording an agreeable promenade for the citizens, and extending beyond the gates, and beyond the lights, but still along the river, to Casino, the fashionable ride (the Rotten Row) of the Florentines. The river is spanned by six bridges. About midway between the Ponte Vecchio and the Suspension Bridge is a fall of water which imparts a grandeur to the scene, and still further sets off that which in itself is almost perfect in its way. Along the river-side, the Lung Arno, is erected a terrace of lofty palatial houses, faced with white marble, which gives a light and graceful, and sunshiny appearance to the noble frontage of the river. The city at this part is clean, neat, and grand, but the interior of the town stands much in need of improvement in many parts.

The principal objects of interest in Florence are the churches and the picture galleries. Accordingly, on the morning after our arrival, I joined a small party, with a very excellent guide, for a day's work. I will narrate our progress, as it may possibly be helpful to some who may one day visit this magnificent city. We proceeded first to the church of Santa Maria Novella. We lost much of the interest here—as indeed in all the churches we have visited—owing to the fact that, it being the season of Lent, all the principal pictures and altar-pieces are veiled. The *campo santo* of this church is a massive cloister, four-square, containing tomb-stones, monuments, &c., in commemoration of the illustrious dead. The Santa Presepio, or holy manger, is a gross and carnal and overdone attempt at representing the circumstances attending the birth of our blessed Lord, containing Joseph and Mary, and the infant child Jesus, and the magi, and oxen, and all the things that a fervid imagination could invent, as belonging to the holy place of the Nativity. To my mind, these tawdry efforts to

represent such scenes are calculated so thoroughly to carnalise these holy associations as to take all the spirituality out of them.

Our next visit was to the church of San Lorenzo. We found some kind of service going on here—the chanting of a litany, I think. There were between forty and fifty priests and singing boys sitting in the space behind and around the altar, intoning in a most lugubrious strain, and in a most unedifying manner. There were only nine worshippers in the church, and these were kneeling before the side altars, and not at all seeming to heed the litany that was being sung at the great altar. This fine church is but the ante-chamber to a still more magnificent building—the Chapelle de Medicis—which stands behind the altar. This chapel is built chiefly of Carrara marble, of all possible colours, generally of the darker hue. The ceiling is filled in with the choicest paintings, in the form of an octagonal dome, each compartment containing a *chef-d'œuvre*. Marble and gems of the rarest and richest kind adorn the splendid altar. So clear is the marble of the walls of this chapel that, looking into it, it serves the purpose of a mirror, reflecting and reproducing, as in a glass, the paintings in the roof and on the walls. In this chapel are contained also the celebrated groups, in statuary, of Michael Angelo, called respectively, "Morning and Twilight" and "Night and Day." The idea of the great master is expressed by figures, sleeping, waking, or awakened.

There is one great drawback to this church of San Lorenzo—the façade is utterly unworthy of the interior; it is like a heterogeneous mass of rubble and mortar loosely thrown together, or heaped up anyhow. Indeed, the frontage of the churches in Italy, in general, is as bad as bad can be; there are but few exceptions. Churches that were built hundreds of years ago have still the holes unfilled that were used for the insertion of scaffoldings. I have often marvelled at the neglect of the exterior of continental churches. Both in the matter of architectural design, and in the manner of building, the façades are mean and undistinguished.

(To be continued.)

"BE CONTENT."—I.

THOUGHTS ON HEBREWS XIII. 5.

BY THE REV. J. C. BYLLE, B.A.



THE words which head this paper are soon spoken, and often cost the speaker very little. Nothing is cheaper than good advice. Everybody fancies he can give his neighbour good counsel, and tell him exactly what he ought to do.

Yet to practise the lesson which heads this

paper is very hard. To talk of contentment in the day of health and prosperity is easy enough; but to be content in the midst of poverty, sickness, trouble, disappointments, and losses, is a state of mind to which very few can attain.

Let us turn to the Bible and see how it handles this great duty of contentment. Let us mark how

the great Apostle of the Gentiles speaks when he would persuade the Hebrew Christians to be content. He backs up his injunction by a beautiful motive. He does not say, nakedly, "Be content;" he adds words which would ring in the ears of all who read his letter, and nerve their hearts for a struggle: "Be content," he says, "with such things as ye have: for He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

Reader, I see things in this golden sentence which, I venture to think, deserve special notice. Give me your attention for a few minutes, and we will try to find out what they are.

I. Let us first examine *the precept which St. Paul gives us*—"Be content with such things as ye have."

These words are very simple. A little child might easily understand them. They contain no high doctrine; they involve no deep metaphysical question; and yet, simple as they are, the duty which these words enjoin on us is one of the highest practical importance to all classes.

Contentment is one of the rarest graces. Like all precious things, it is most uncommon. The old Puritan divine, who wrote a book about it, did well to call his book "The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment." An Athenian philosopher is said to have gone into the market-place at mid-day with a lantern, in order to find out an honest man. I think he would have found it equally difficult to find one quite contented.

The fallen angels had previously heaven itself to dwell in, and the immediate presence and favour of God; but they were not content. Adam and Eve had the garden of Eden to live in, with a free grant of everything in it excepting one tree; but they were not content. Ahab had his throne and kingdom; but, so long as Naboth's vineyard was not his, he was not content. Haman was the chief favourite of the Persian king; but, so long as Mordecai sat at the gate, he was not content.

It is just the same everywhere in the present day. Murmuring, dissatisfaction, discontent with what we have, meet us at every turn. To say, with Jacob, "I have enough," seems flatly contrary to the grain of human nature. To say, "I want more," seems the mother tongue of every child of Adam. Our little ones around our family hearths are daily illustrations of the truth of what I am saying. They learn to ask for "more" much sooner than they learn to be satisfied. They are far more ready to cry for what they want, than to say "thank you" when they have got it.

There are few readers of this very paper, I will venture to say, who do not want something or other different from what they have—something more or something less. What you have does not seem so good as what you have not. If you only had this or that thing granted, you fancy you would be quite happy.

Hear now with what power St. Paul's direction ought to come to all our consciences: "Be content," he says, "with such things as ye have," not with such things as ye once used to have—not with such things as ye hope to have—but with such things as ye have now. With such things, whatever they may be, we are to be content—with such a dwelling, such a position, such health, such income, such work, such circumstances as we have, we are to be content.

Reader, a spirit of this kind is the secret of a light heart and an easy mind. Few, I am afraid, have the least idea what a short cut to happiness it is to be content.

To be content is to be *rich* and well off. He is the rich man who has no wants, and requires no more. I ask not what his income may be. A man may be rich in a cottage and poor in a palace.

To be content is to be *independent*. He is the independent man who hangs on no created things for comfort, and has God for his portion.

Such a man is the only one who is always happy. Nothing can come amiss or go wrong with such a man. Afflictions will not shake him, and sickness will not disturb his peace. He can gather grapes from thorns, and figs on thistles, for he can get good out of evil. Like Paul and Silas, he will sing in prison, with his feet fast in the stocks. Like Peter, he will sleep quietly in prospect of death, the very night before his execution. Like Job, he will bless the Lord, even when stripped of all his comforts.

Ah! reader, if you would be truly happy (who does not want this?) seek it where alone it can be found. Seek it not in money, seek it not in pleasure, nor in friends, nor in learning. Seek it in having a will in perfect harmony with the will of God. Seek it in studying to be content.

You may say, It is fine talking: how can we be always content in such a world? I answer, that you need to cast away your pride, and know your deserts, in order to be thankful in any condition. If men really knew that they deserve nothing, and are debtors to God's mercy every day, they would soon cease to complain.

You may say, perhaps, that you have such crosses, and trials, and troubles, that it is impossible to be content. I answer, that you would do well to remember your ignorance. Do you know best what is good for you, or does God? Are you wiser than he?

The things you want might ruin your soul. The things you have lost might have poisoned you. Remember, Rachel must needs have children, and she had them and died. Lot must needs live near Sodom, and all his goods were burned. Let these things sink down into your heart.

II. Let us, in the second place, examine *the ground on which St. Paul builds his precept*. That ground is one single text of Scripture.

It is striking to observe what a small foundation the apostle seems to lay down, when he bids us be content. He holds out no promise of earthly good things and temporal rewards. He simply quotes a verse of God's word. The Master hath spoken. "He hath said."

It is striking, beside this, to observe that the text he quotes was not originally addressed to the Hebrew Christians, but to Joshua; and yet St. Paul applies it to them. This shows that Bible promises are the common property of all believers. All have a right and title to them. All believers make one mystical body; and in hundreds of cases, that which was spoken to one may be fairly used by all.

But the main point I want to impress on men's minds is this: that we ought to make the texts and promises of the Bible our refuge in time of trouble, and the fountain of our soul's comfort.

When St. Paul wanted to enforce a grace and recommend a duty, he quoted a text. When you and I would give a reason for our hope, or when we feel that we need strength and consolation, we must go to our Bibles, and try to find out suitable texts. The lawyer uses old cases and decisions, when he pleads his cause. "Such a judge has said such a thing, and therefore," he argues, "it is a settled point." The soldier on the battle-field takes up certain positions, and does certain things; and if you ask him why, he will say, "I have such and such orders from my general, and I obey them."

The true Christian must always use his Bible in like manner. The Bible must be his book of reference, and precedents. The Bible must be to him his captain's orders. If any one asks him why he thinks as he does, lives as he does, feels as he does, all he has need to reply is, "God has spoken to such an effect: I have my orders, and that is enough."

Reader, I know not whether I make the point clear, but it is one which, simple as it seems, is of great practical importance. I want you to see the place and office of the Bible, and the unspeakable importance of knowing it well, and being acquainted with its contents. I want you to arm yourself with texts and verses of the Bible fastened down in your memory, to read so as to remember, and to remember so as to use what you read.

You and I have trouble and sorrow before us: it needs no prophetic eye to see that. Sickesses, deaths, partings, separations, disappointments, are sure to come. What is to sustain us in the days of darkness, which are many? Nothing so able to do it as texts out of the Bible.

You and I, in all probability, may lie for months on a bed of sickness. Heavy days and weary nights, an aching body and an enfeebled mind, may make life a burden. And what will support us? Nothing is likely to cheer and sustain us so much as verses out of the Bible.

You and I have death to look forward to. There will be friends to be left, home to be given up, the grave to be visited, an unknown world to be entered, and the last judgment after all. And what will sustain and comfort us when our last moments draw nigh? Nothing, I firmly believe, is so able to help our heart, in that solemn hour, as texts out of the Bible.

I want men to fill their minds with passages of Scripture while they are well and strong, that they may have sure help in the day of need. I want them to be diligent in studying their Bibles, and becoming familiar with their contents, in order that the grand old Book may stand by them and talk with them when all earthly friends fail.

(To be concluded in our next.)

SUMMER.

I.

FULL early have I watched for thee,
O bright-begotten of the ardent Sun!
For thou art dear beyond compare, to me,
In that thou bringest o'er the southern sea
My faithful one.

II.

And now I see
Thine airy feet upon the misty peak
That veils the sun from me;
And from thine unseen radiant brow
A rose-flush falls upon Aurora's cheek,
And golden light about the visage meek
Of Hope late calm, but eager now.

III.

O love! 'tis now as when thou wentest hence:
The restless swallows are old friends of thine;

And dark and dense
Is the stiff foliage of the beech and pine:
The tall grass bends to the wind in shining
waves;
And in the gleaming stream
Yon woeful willow its low branches laves:—
Another willow lays a leafy fence
About thy parents' graves.

IV.

All things are now as when thou wentest hence,
Save that the bright enamel of the gift,
Which oft in secret to my lips I lift,
My fondling fingers wear away
From weary day to day:
And save that on my paling face
The bony hand of skeleton Suspense
Hath left an aching trace.

BONAVIA.

THE DEEPER DEPTH;

OR, SCENES OF REAL LIFE AMONG THE VERY POOR.—NO. X.



KENT STREET, Borough, though now so dirty and disreputable, was formerly a very important thoroughfare, being the principal entrance in London from Kent and the adjacent counties. Near one end of it stood an hospital for lepers, called the Loke, or Lock; and, at the other, the ancient church of St. George, pertaining to the Abbey of Bermondsey. Along this street swept the splendid procession of Henry V. on his triumphant entry into his capital, after the great victory of Agincourt. Did the brave king turn his head to glance at the King's Bench Prison, not far distant, in which he had been confined by Judge Gascoigne, who dared to enforce the sacred rights of justice even against the heir of the Majesty of England? Through this street, also, in 1534, the followers of Sir Thomas Wyatt poured, like an angry tide, on their way to destroy the goods and library of the Bishop of Winchester, after which they passed on to Kingston, "intending to enter London that way," but their leader was speedily taken and executed. We know not whether the proximity of the leper hospital, already spoken of, will account for the fact, but Kent Street, with its numerous courts, intricate passages, and alleys, may well be called "St. Giles's over the water;" the tenements are quite as dilapidated, the inhabitants are quite as destitute: on the whole it would be difficult to decide which locality contains a "deeper depth" of human privation and wretchedness. As you pass through it, you ask yourself whether there can be such an official as a sanitary inspector in the district. In most of the courts, the closets are in such an abominable condition, that they are absolutely unfit for use. The cisterns are very small, badly situated—frequently without lids and on the ground, so that every child can dabble in the water, while vessels of *all kinds* are dipped in it—and so foul withal, that the poor people cannot drink it, unless they catch it from the tap as it flows in. How, under these circumstances, can we expect them to keep from the public-house? What are sanitary inspectors for, if not to compel laggard landlords to do their duty? You cannot enter these courts without having every sense offended. Were fever to break out here, as it did a year or two back, it would repeat its former ravages, while the deaths of its victims would morally lie at the door, not only of those owners of house property, who take the poor man's rent and deny him, in return, that prime necessary of health—pure water, but also of the sham officials, who connive at such shameful neglect and such gross injustice. It is no un-

common thing for the inhabitants of a court to be entirely without water for weeks and weeks, through their landlord having a dispute with the company. Here is an instance. The owner of some houses in this locality was informed by the water company that his cisterns must be fitted with a simple and well-known apparatus to prevent the water from running to waste; and on his refusing to provide it, regardless of the wants of the families occupying the tenements, the supply was cut off. What did the landlord do? Why, he waited until he had saved sufficient, by not having to pay any water rate, and then he had the cisterns properly fitted up; meanwhile the poor people had to beg water as best they could, or go without. Who cared what they did or what they suffered? certainly neither their landlord nor the company. It may be thought that the rent obtained by the owner of small house property is so low, that he may be somewhat excused if he should fail in caring for the tenants. Not so; taking into account the different accommodation, the poor pay far higher rent than the rich. The mansions in Belgravia are not so dear, in proportion, as the meanest room in one of these fever-breeding dens. What may our readers think is the rental derived from this wretched court in which we are standing? It contains some twelve tumble-down tenements, each room in which is occupied by a family; and let furnished—although 5s. would more than pay for the articles it contains—at 3s. 6d. or 4s. a week, so that the total rental derived from the fifty or sixty families residing here would exceed £500 per annum; and yet they do not have so much done for them as a landlord in the suburbs would do for a tenant paying £30 a year!

Some of the houses in this street were built in the reign of Charles II.; but although low, ill-arranged, and in a dilapidated condition, they are better than those of more recent date, in the construction of which everything has been done to save expense. St. George's New Town, on the eastern side of Kent Street, looks well to the eye; but if you examine the cottages, which stand on undrained land, formerly a receptacle for filth of every description, you will find they are absolutely dropping to pieces, scarcely a roof is watertight, while the plaster of the rooms, having been made of soap lyes and street mud, generates all kinds of vermin, so that in the warm weather the houses are positively swarming. The moral condition of the people corresponds but too well with their dwellings. Look below the surface and you will find that drunkenness, theft, and vice, abound. Several houses of ill-fame in this district have



Drawn by C. J. STANILAND.]

THE TEETOTAL PONY.—See p. 634.
(A Sketch from Life)

been shut up, but the unfortunate inmates merely moved into the next street, so that the evil has been shifted, not extirpated. The "Town," as they call it, is now comparatively quiet. On Sundays, however, men and boys are drinking, and cursing, and gambling all day long. The man that stole the portmanteau from the gentleman just starting on his wedding tour belongs here, and to-night they have a meeting at the public-house opposite, which bears a doubtful reputation, to subscribe towards a fund for his defence. Do you see that portly-looking man coming out of that mean-looking house? He has gold-studs, gold albert chain, gold eye-glass, a handsome railway rug hangs gracefully over one arm, with his disengaged hand he carries a silk umbrella, while a porter walks behind carrying a trunk studded with brass nails. Who can he be? The Chairman of the Vestry, at the very least. He may come to that in time, but at present he is an expert "hotel" thief, and is just starting on some little expedition, the results of which may be duly chronicled in the papers, a few days hence. It does not speak very well for the people here, that the house in which the rent collector lives is sadly battered and defaced, so many brickbats have been thrown at the door that it can scarcely turn upon its hinges. In this mild way they express their views of the rights of property in general, and of the question of rent in particular.

It would, however, be very unjust to conclude that all the inhabitants of the "Town" are thus ill-conditioned and depraved. There are many families that are industrious and well-conducted, while they deeply lament the proximity of their dangerous neighbours. Some of them expressed to us their dread of the return next month of three notorious characters, whose term of penal servitude would then expire. The price paid for work in this district does not tend to encourage honesty and virtue. Here is a poor woman who tries to support herself and her sick husband by making shirts. She has to find needles and cotton, and is paid for each shirt 1½d. Another makes button and stud holes in ladies' linen cuffs. There are forty-eight holes in a dozen, and seventy stitches in each hole, making a total of 3,360 carefully-drawn stitches, for which she is paid 2½d. only, and she has to find her needles, cotton, &c. Others stitch patten ties twice round, and are paid less than a penny for the set of twenty-four. Others, again, paste the binding on these patten ties. Each tie has to go through the hand five times, while for twenty-four bundles, of twenty-four ties each, they are paid from 6d. to 10d., according to the quality. They have to work hard for two hours to earn ½d. And all the while the Tempter is whispering, "Why work like a slave? why don't you do as others do, and wear fine clothes and enjoy

yourselves?" In another house we find a man making "cats and kittens," to sell in the streets, out of whelk and winkle shells, and a little plaster of Paris. They are very ingeniously constructed: one kitten sits gravely on either side, and a third on the back of the mother. He gets 1d. each for them, and sometimes sells from twenty to thirty dozen on a Saturday night. A poor bonnet-maker—a widow with six children—living in a very small room, does not do half so well as this. Though she works early and late, she often feels the pinch of hunger. Had she but a pound or two, she might get a more suitable room, employ some hands, and multiply her earnings twentyfold. True are the words of the wise king: "The destruction of the poor is their poverty." We come next to a man who collects broken glass, &c., in the streets. Poor fellow, he showed us the results of three days' labour, which would bring him 1s. 3d. Another man, not long out of prison, whither he had been sent for stabbing, living up-stairs, can earn from £1 10s. to £2 a week by collecting dogs' manure for the Bermondsey tanners. "Is that the Teetotal Pony?" asked our companion of a stalwart man, busy painting the wheels of a little cart in his backyard. "Yes, sir, that's him, and a rare good un he is too. I've had en clipped, and paid three half-crowns to have it done—but I'd give all that to put his coat on again; for I says to myself, 'If I be a cold working out here in my shirt-sleeves, what must the pony be, seein' as how he's so werry bare?' But, howsomever, you shall see en, and judge for yourselfs." While he went into the shed to bring out the pony for our closer inspection, our companion whispered, "This man was the greatest drunkard in the neighbourhood; but he was induced to sign the pledge; and he has really bought the pony out of the money he has saved from the public-house. He is a chimney-sweep, so that it is useful to him in his business; and, altogether, he is doing very well now." By this time the pony had been brought to the palings of the yard, and appeared to deserve the good opinion of its master, who produced a bowl of beans, on the top of which was a handful of tea-leaves. "What are they for?" we asked. "Well, sir," he replied, "my missus allays gives en the leaves out of her tea-pot, and he eats 'em sure enough. Maybe it's because we call en The Teetotaler."

Passing out of the "Town," we entered a court filled with boys and girls, laughing and playing, and found, just inside an open doorway, a poor old woman suffering from dropsy, lying on a bed supported by chairs. With tears in her eyes, she said that she had been "given over" by the doctor that very day, and that she felt her end was near. The commingling of her sad, broken voice with the joyous shouts of the children who were playing close to her, was very suggestive. Thus strangely

youth and age, health and sickness, joy and sorrow, life and death are often found side by side. The agent of the London City Mission labouring in this district is much beloved by the people, some of whom have derived no little benefit from his visits. It not unfrequently happens that those who spend their weary lives in trying to discover how to live, learn even sooner than their wealthier fellow-men how to die. One poor fellow whose Christian faith enabled him to rise above the squalor and destitution around him, when asked, not long before his death, whether he felt certain that it would be well with him beyond the grave, replied, in his own simple way, "I know Jesus will receive me at last, and squeeze me to himself."

Do you see that woman standing at that shop door? Yes; she is apparently the wife of the proprietor. It is well you said *apparently*; for, through her, the man's true wife started off to Australia, and his three daughters were driven into the streets. Not a pleasant family history by any means. Yonder a little crowd is gathering round two fellows, who support between them a good-looking young woman, hopelessly and helplessly intoxicated. She can scarcely walk, and she has evidently had more than one severe fall—her appearance is altogether most deplorable. Our companion, who has been many years in the district, and knows every resident, pronounces her a stranger, and volunteers his opinion that she is a servant, who, having fallen into bad company, has been drugged and ruined. The poor creature's ill-looking conductors take her into a low public-house, and the interest excited by her strange condition speedily dies away, as ripples on the surface of a lake when a stone has sunk into its depths. It is as though the people felt she had already become one of themselves. The number of women we meet, some with one, and others with both eyes blackened, is something remarkable; but

they seem to take it as a matter of course. Their acquaintances, who pass them, ask them no questions respecting their facial disfigurement, and they make no complaints.

Kent Street, about which we shall have something more to say in our next paper, presents a fine field to philanthropists who indulge in the luxury of relieving the necessities of the poor with their own hands. The agencies already at work are quite insufficient to grapple with the evils that exist. The city missionaries and Bible women are devoted and faithful, but they have but few helpers—indeed, one of the former (who has the whole of the western side of the street under his charge) stands quite alone, through the living being in a state of sequestration, without assistance or sympathy of any kind. He has no means of putting the boys and girls—whom it is most desirable to remove from the midst of vice—into refuges or homes; no friend to enable him to give the starving poor a crust of bread. "When I have read and prayed with them," said he, "it quite knocks me up to have to leave them without a bit of bread to eat, and sometimes I am obliged to run off to the first baker's and buy them a loaf out of my own pocket." We are told that the City Missionaries should not notice the temporal distress of the families they visit—that their true, their only work, is spiritual instruction and consolation. The fact is, they must be something more, or rather something less, than men to witness that distress without feeling for the sufferers. Could they do so, they would certainly be unfitted for the high duty assigned them. As it is, they find it difficult to obey their instructions in this particular; they cannot act the Stoic, the strain upon their sympathy is often greater than they can bear.

(To be continued.)

[Rev. G. W. M'Crea begs to acknowledge the receipt of 8s., kindly forwarded to him by "N."]

DEPARTMENT FOR THE YOUNG.

GIANT DESPAIR.



ELL, may we have it?"

"No, no; mamma will not give it. She says she wishes us to read it only on Sundays. What shall we do?"

"Act it," said George Vernon. "We'll have a castle—Doubting Castle, you know. You be Giant Despair, and I'll be Great-heart, and we'll have a first-rate fight."

"Bravo!" said Philip Vernon. "There's a thick snow-drift against the arbour, down the garden; I'll have that for my castle, and one of the girls

shall be my wife. Linda, you'll be Mrs. Diffidence."

"But," said George, "I must have a whole band of pilgrims—Christian, Mercy, the four young men, and old Honest were all with Great-heart. Shall I ask the Wyants and Tom Jolly to come?"

"The very thing!" said Philip; "go for them, and I will look after my castle."

George soon returned, bringing with him Robert and Henry Wyant and Tom Jolly.

Mildred and Kate Vernon came too. So the children set to work, and arranged their parties, and fortified the castle, and made ready for battle.

Giant Despair walked into his den, and he and Mrs. Diffidence sat down to dinner. In another minute a heavy snow-ball thundered against the arbour, and shook the snow from its roof in a shining shower upon them.

"I must see to this, my dear," said the Giant as he took his great club in his hand and looked around; "a most impertinent thing, truly. I believe I see pilgrims; have they done it? Dare they do such a thing? Hallo! down there, you fellows; who and what are you that are so hardy as after this manner to molest the Giant Despair?"

"It is I, Great-heart; prepare thyself to fight, for I am come to take away thy head."

"Oh, thou bold rascal; take it if thou canst get it! And as for the fighting—come on!"

So on they came, and to it they fell, and the snow-balls flew thick and fast. The giant fought well, but he knew that in the long run he must give in. So the Giant fell, as if by a blow from Great-heart, and the lads made him prisoner.

Meanwhile they rummaged the castle dungeons, and brought out certain doll prisoners, and made great rejoicings over them, and were about to demolish the snow-drift, when the dinner-bell sounded from Mr. Vernon's house, and they all had to separate to their homes.

Such rosy cheeks, and blue fingers! Such wet boots and shoes!

"Where have you been? What have you been doing with yourselves?"

"Acting 'Pilgrim's Progress,'" said the lads; and their eyes sparkled with glee.

"Well, run away now, and come with clean faces and tidy-looking hair to dinner."

While they were up-stairs, Mrs. Vernon said to herself, "I do not think the children have at all thought of the meaning of what has been their play. I must try to teach them something of it."

On the next day, Mrs. Vernon told Linda and George and Philip that she was going to take a walk, and that if they liked they might accompany her. Glad enough they were to do so, because they always enjoyed a walk with their mamma, she was so good, and wise, and kind, and they loved her.

Soon they entered the great town, and then there were fewer trees and more houses. At length they reached the workhouse. It was a great gloomy-looking building, high iron railings stood around the courtyard in front of it, and at one corner of the yard was a lodge. Here Mrs. Vernon stopped, and knocked at the door. A tall, thin old man opened it; he was the porter, and he told Mrs. Vernon that she might in two or three minutes enter the house when a man who had gone in should return to act as her guide. So after a few minutes this man, whose name was Bob, returned, and took the Vernons up-stairs to a large room that was called No. 1 Consumption Ward. In it were

many men, some lying on narrow beds, some standing or sitting in groups by the fire. Bob opened a large door out of this room, and passing through it the Vernons stood in No. 2 Consumption Ward; and here, in a far corner, lay James Cleary, a poor young lad whom Mrs. Vernon had come to see.

"How are you, James?" asked Mrs. Vernon.

"Poorly, ma'am—poorly; very weak. It's very good of you, ma'am, and the young lady, and the gentlemen, to come."

"Not at all, James. We heard you were ill, and were very sorry, and thought we should like to ask you if there is anything we can do to help you."

"Oh, ma'am! if you'd write to my mother for me—my poor old mother!—and me her only son! If you'd spake words to her, ma'am, in your letter that would comfort her—"

"I will, James, I will; tell me what I must say." And Mrs. Vernon seated herself on a stool by the bed, and wrote in her pocket-book all that James wished her to say to his mother.

"That'll be all," said James, at last.

"But, James, cannot you tell your mother something about your hope for a better world?"

"Hope, ma'am!" said the lad, in a bitter tone; "sure it's me that has no hope, but fear."

"Fear of what, James?"

"Meetin' the great God, ma'am, wid my sins all upon my back, an' never to be sure that the half of them, nor the quarter neither, is done away wid!"

A violent fit of coughing here came on, and James had to lie back and rest a little while.

"Linda," whispered George, "isn't it dreadful? It's just like Giant Despair, isn't it?"

"Yes, yes," whispered Linda; "but hush! don't talk now."

Soon James spoke again—

"I've been such a sinner, I know I have; I've not thought of the great God when I had my health, an' now sure I'm fear'd he won't hear me in my trouble!"

Then Mrs. Vernon told James of what Jesus had done that sinners may be saved: how he *lived* for them, keeping the law of God unbroken, fulfilling all righteousness; how he *died* for them, bearing the punishment due to sin, and that his blood cleanseth from all sin.

"It's blessed news you tell me; sure it's blessed news!"

"Then doubt no more. Think of His power, think of His love, and be happy, James. And now you are tired—lie down again."

After a little more quiet talk with the sick lad, Mrs. Vernon said good-bye to him, and the children shook hands with him, and they came away.

On reaching the street, for a time, no one spoke; but at last George said—

"Mamma, do you know I think that was so like Giant Despair?"

"What was like?"

"The way poor James was in, with fright about being lost."

"Yes," said Linda, "and mamma is Great-heart. Ah, you're a good mamma!"

"Children," said the mother, "I had help from on high."

DAISY-CHAIN.

A RHYME FOR YOUNG READERS.



OW upon the shining meadows
Spring hath sprinkled her own snow,
Daisies white,
All silver-bright,
With little eyes of golden glow.

Little golden eyes unfolden
To the dazzling one above
In blue expanse;
With baby-glance
Of innocence and trustful love.

Little children, glad and merry,
Toddle, romp, and race along,
Hand in hand
To daisy-land,
With trills of laughter and of song.

Silvern treasure without measure
Shines upon the sunny fields;
Every elf
Upgathers pelf,
Which all the ground in plenty yields.

Now they weave a chain of daisies;
Link by link it longer grows,
But a hand
Breaks through the band
And all around the treasure flows.

Life is such a chain of daisies,
Each on the other must depend:
One rude break
A breach will make,
That tears nor wishes ne'er can mend.

Ms.

KATE ORMOND'S DOWER.

BY MRS. C. L. BALFOUR, AUTHOR OF "THE FAMILY HONOUR," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE TRESPASS IN THE BOAT-HOUSE.

IT was by no means fortunate for the poor wanderer, whose vagaries we have described, that she should have found her way to the boat-house, or that her stay there should have been unmolested. Sometimes, indeed, it happens, and perhaps not unfrequently, that amid the haunts of men, where wealth abounds and comforts are showered down, and all the busy industries and sympathies of life are practised and enjoyed, some poor stragglers on the margin, or in the rear of the great marching army of society, fall and perish by the wayside, their failure and condition unnoticed, until it is past all remedy. Yet this is not, after all, a very common case. It ought to be an impossible one. But if people slink away, like sick or wounded animals, to die in a remote lair, it is not so easy to affix blame, or charge certain pompous, important, and indignant parochial officers with neglect. And so it was that, in about ten days after the incident recorded in our last chapter, an event occurred which found its way into the newspapers, and supplied the usual nine days' impotent talk and vague wonder.

The weather, which had been charming at the time of the family entering on the occupation of their new residence, had suddenly become windy and wet; and Mrs. Tregabbitt complained on the third wet day—

"There is nothing more cheerless than a cloudy, weeping summer's day. It quite wears me out; in short, my dears," she added, "I think I shall go to

town, and cheer myself up a bit by making a few calls, and see some Cornish friends, whose arrival I expect."

"Well, *chère mère*, if the weather is bad at home, it is surely worse to go about in," objected Kate, who was quietly ensconced in a cosy nook of the morning-room, at work at a drawing, while Edina's skilful hands were plying the embroidering needle diligently for Mrs. Tregabbitt on some ornament that she required. In their respective occupations, the two girls had found a remedy for *ennui*, which their matronly friend had not, and she almost yawned as she answered—

"Get on, Edda, with that work, it's not well for you, child, to get into a dawdling way; and, Kate, my love, excuse me, but you'll certainly make your nose red if you stoop over that drawing."

So saying, she departed to dress for her drive to town, and to escape a little, it may be, from herself.

Mrs. Tregabbitt had left word that Kate and Edina were not to wait dinner for her, and after a long morning, passed nearly in silence, they severally retired to make their usual change of dress; and, when they met at table, the pattering of the incessant rain-drops on the windows was so nearly the only sound, that each became nervous, and Kate, exclaimed, suddenly—

"Edda, I forgot all this time to ask you if you play and sing? Did I not see a music-book lying on a table in your room?"

"You would not care to hear my poor efforts in that way, Miss Ormond: you so greatly excel me."

"Don't be such a little hypocrite, Edina, depreciating yourself in that way. I shall insist on hearing you. And it just occurs to me that if I take lessons

—and I shall, as soon as we feel really settled, you, too, must do so.”

It was kindly meant. Edina coloured deeply, and said, rather coldly—

“To what purpose should I seek to cultivate an accomplishment I may never want?”

“Oh, if not for enjoyment, why for profit; anything well learnt yields both. I’m not great in the didactic and preceptive style, Miss Smith, but I may give you the benefit of that one piece of wisdom, though perhaps I do not practise it myself.”

Nothing became Kate Ormond so much as being roused into a little opposition. Her eyes filled with light, the colour mantled in her cheek, and her whole frame was instinct with animation. Edina felt the formality of being called Miss Smith, and said, mildly—

“If you wish it, Miss Ormond, I will play for you this evening. You—you—never asked me before.”

“Call me Kate, you tiresome child,” was the reply, in a good-humoured tone. “Miss Ormond is for dress occasions; and as to asking you, Edda, I thought you were like a young girl, and not like an oyster.”

“A what, Kate?”

“An oyster, that carries its pearls within its shell, out of sight. A young girl likes to have them seen.”

In better humour with each other after this little sally, they adjourned to the drawing-room. The leaden sky gave its hue to the light of the summer evening, the trees on the lawn drooped beneath the rush of the rain, and gusts of wind flapped sheets of wet every now and then against the windows. To this sombre accompaniment Edina opened the instrument. She had said truly that her playing and singing were inferior to Kate’s; but there was a quality in the voice so pathetic and intensely sweet, that amply atoned for any defects of execution or want of skilful development. A Scottish lady had once been for some years teacher at Guines, and she had solaced her own exile by teaching the young Edina, who was an apt pupil, some of the exquisite songs of her native land.

To Kate’s infinite surprise she heard “Auld Robin Gray,” sung with a sympathy and feeling such as she had never heard among more ambitious and practised singers, and when “The Land of the Leal” followed, Kate crept from her chair towards the instrument, and, at the close of the strain, involuntarily kissed her young companion, and softly whispered the one word, “Sweet.” She was not given to weeping, but her large eyes gleamed with the lustre of unshed tears.

The lovely words of the Baroness Nairn’s ballad, had struck a chord in each heart: they both thought for the moment of something beyond this world. “The Land of the Leal” was suggestive of a higher life, of nobler aims and better feelings than any their careless youth had yet attained to. As they embraced in silence, they were both startled by the fierce barking of a dog.

In the stable-yard, at the rear of the dwelling, Keeper, a watch-dog, had been recently chained. For nights past he was restless, and Mrs. Tregabbitt had complained of being disturbed by the creature’s howling and whining. She ordered that the animal should be exercised that day—an order which, owing to the rain, the helper in

the stable had not obeyed, until he could put it off no longer. The dog was unchained; but, instead of obediently following the footsteps of the man who had released him, and taking a scamper along the high road at the back of the house, the creature impetuously broke all bounds, leaped up and scrambled over the fence of the garden, rushed across the lawn, through the shrubbery, over the small gate we have described, down the steps, and into the boat-house, where he uttered that vociferous barking, which, we have seen, had broken in so rudely on the music of Miss Ormond and Edina.

They both rose and went to the window; but, being deterred by the weather and some fear of the dog, did not venture out. The man in the stables was joined in pursuing the enraged animal by the only other manservant who was at home, and they ran across the lawn, taking the direction that Keeper had. One of the maid-servants, too, impelled by curiosity, and yet anxious not to be seen from the house, ran along the path outside the shrubbery to the same spot. Not many moments elapsed when Robert, the footman, with a face white and haggard, came running along the path, followed by the girl, who was screaming at the top of her voice, in a panic that put her beyond any dread of her young mistress’s displeasure. The stable-man, looking scared and haggard, brought up the rear, his hand tightly holding the collar of the dog, and dragging the enraged animal, who was still barking, violently along the path.

Both the young ladies saw that something had happened, and Edina involuntarily opened the window and stepped out on the terrace, followed by Kate, both saying to the maid-servant, with one voice—“Lizzie, are you hurt? has Keeper bitten you?” for this was at first the natural conclusion.

“No, miss, no! Oh, dear! it’s dreadful!”

“What is dreadful?”

“Oh, the boat-house—the boat-house!”

The words were scarcely uttered, when Kate, who had no want of energy in an emergency, instantly hurried along the path, followed by Edina. Neither at the moment hearing, certainly not heeding, the words of Robert and the stable-man—

“Don’t go there, pray, miss. It’s not a sight for you.”

The rusty nail that so lightly held the staple of the gate had given way as the dog had beat against it, and the two girls, with fleet tread, were through and down the steps before Robert had turned to follow them, and so it happened that they stood together in the boat-house, and looked around a moment wonderingly—only a moment!

The next instant they both saw a dark mass, wrapped in garments saturated with wet, lying in a heap upon the ground. Torn fragments of dress, which the dog had just rent away, were scattered all around. A step forward brought them close to this object, and, not knowing quite what she did, Edina, who was nearest, stooped down and stretched out her fingers. They came in contact with a hand. It was so icy cold that the young girl recoiled with a shudder, pulling aside, in her haste to withdraw her hand, the fragment of an old crape veil, and leaving bare the wasted lineaments

of a face, now pale and rigid with the touch of death! Kate was looking aghast and horror-stricken over her companion's shoulder: her eyes fell on the marbled visage, with its wide-open, glassy eyes. She caught fast hold of Edina with the convulsive clutch of fear, and for a moment the two clung to each other, their eyes fixed in horror on the shocking spectacle at their feet, unable for an instant to move or speak.

"What is it?—oh! what is it?" at length gasped Edina.

"It is death!" faltered Kate, her white lips seeming to stiffen and impede her utterance.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE ADMONITION OF THE DEAD.

"PLEASE, miss, do come away," broke in the voice of the man-servant Robert. "The perleece will be fetched: do, please—it aint a sight for the like of you ladies. A detestable vagabond have trespassed here, very improper, and seems like to have died, miss."

"Seems!" said Kate, impatiently, *has* died—died of want at my very threshold!"

She trembled so violently as she spoke, that Edina, amid her own agitation, was aroused to the necessity of helping her; and yet, notwithstanding her shock, the young girl could not, for some seconds, wholly withdraw her gaze from that stony face: those blank, awful eyes, that, seeing nothing here, had a terrible far-off gaze in their fixedness. Surely that rigid face was not wholly unknown to Edina, who said, mechanically—

"Yes, we must go, Kate. Can you walk? Stay an instant, I must cover those dreadful eyes."

Taking with one hand her cambric handkerchief from her pocket, she clung with the other to Miss Ormond's side, and contrived, by dropping on one knee and reaching along, reverently to cover the face of the dead. Then rising, they both tottered from the boat-house, ascended the steps with trembling knees, and were met at the wicket by Jessy and the cook with shawls and umbrellas, both domestics uttering wondering exclamations, and giving the information that "Betsey the servant, who had been in the boat-house, was in strong hysterics in the kitchen."

Silently the young ladies entered the drawing-room by the terrace, and sank down on the first seats they came to, neither fainting nor crying, but benumbed and bewildered with the spectacle they had seen, still before their mental vision.

Jessy began to talk, but Kate decisively silenced her. "Don't speak about it."

"Shall I get you a cup of strong coffee?" was the waiting-woman's sensible proposal, and she left in quest of the panacea, the two girls drawing closer together when they were alone, and striving by silent companionship to overcome their agitation.

Edina had seen that dead face far more clearly than Miss Ormond. On her memory those pale and rigid features and glazed eyes were stereotyped, never to be quite effaced; but both shared the nervous excitement such a discovery was likely to cause. They clung together, as footsteps in the garden announced the arrival

of the police; and the hearing of each seemed preternaturally acute in following the track of the investigation. Though the women-servants closed the windows, drew down the blinds, and shut out the leaden evening, lighting up extra lights to give some kind of cheerfulness to the room, yet Edina, at all events, seemed to see the form raised up, with its damp and clinging garments placed on the stretcher, brought on the shoulders of the police up the steps, and carried away, as Jessy—who had managed to run to and fro from house to garden—now told them, to the parish dead-house.

"To be sure, miss, it's very unpleasant, but there'll have to be an inquest to find out why she died."

Whether Jessy would have favoured them with any more of her legal information is uncertain, for a gentleman's voice sounded in the hall, and Robert brought in a message from Mr. Clipp, craving an interview. At any other time Miss Ormond would have declined to see an uninvited guest in the evening; but just then it was a relief to her to remember that Mr. Clipp was the professional adviser of her guardians as well as an acquaintance, and she ordered him to be immediately shown in.

There was such an easy, cheerful assurance in Mr. Clipp's manner, as he entered the room and bowed over, as he lightly touched, Kate's extended hand, that she rallied instantly, and was able to say, calmly—

"You find us in great confusion, Mr. Clipp. I suppose you are aware of the sad occurrence that has happened?"

"Nothing, my dear Miss Ormond, to make a trouble of—very annoying, certainly—very; but an annoyance that, where there are out-premises not properly secured, is likely to occur. I was passing, and saw the police at your gate, and of course I made inquiries about the annoyance. The only thing to be regretted is that you should have so unfortunately witnessed the—*the scene*. This young lady here" (turning, as he spoke, the icy glitter of his clear, cold, grey eyes on Edina) "should certainly have seen that you were not alarmed. How was it, Miss Smith, that you lost your presence of mind, and let Miss Ormond have this fright?"

The remark was so far useful to Edina that it caused a revulsion of feeling. The blood which had gathered to her heart, rose hotly to cheek and brow, as he spoke, and a flash of anger darted from her eyes; but any reply she might have made was stopped by Miss Ormond, who instantly said—

"We could not help going, Mr. Clipp; we were both alike in the matter; our going was involuntary."

"Oh, I do not doubt the amiability of your feeling in this annoyance. But, now, pray dismiss it from your mind. Unhappily, vagrants swarm about our lanes just at this season: a month hence, and we are free of them. They favour the hop-grounds, then." He smiled an easy re-assuring smile, but it called up no response but a sigh from Kate and a shudder from Edina; and he continued, "Yes, dismiss it, Miss Ormond. All further annoyance in this matter I can prevent. And if your people had not been—pardon me—fools, you need not have been troubled about it."

At this moment the sound of carriage wheels, and a ringing at the gate announced Mrs. Tregabitt's return.

She at once without waiting to hear Jessy's remarks entered the drawing-room. She was not alone; Gilbert Graspington was with her, and agitated as Edina yet was, she could not avoid noticing that Mr. Clipp and her cousin bowed a little stiffly to each other. The former, however, was master of the situation, and repeated so briefly to Mrs. Tregabbitt the fact, that a beggar-woman had been found in the boat-house—where it seemed she had died—no doubt from natural causes, and that Miss Ormond had thereby received a shock she ought to have been spared, that Mrs. Tregabbitt was so full of compassion for her dear Kate, that she glowed with a sense of anger at vagrants, or parish officers, or somebody, for being so impertinent. So tea was served, and the ghastly incident of the day was no more recurring. Kate's cheek was a shade paler. A heavy weight lay at Edina's heart, and both were relieved when their visitors left and they could retire for the night.

It proved a sleepless night, which so wearied Edina that, with the first rays of the sun, she rose from her bed, and, looking from her window, saw that Nature, like a capricious beauty, had dried her tears, and was this morning arraying herself in her brightest smiles and freshest vesture. When our spirits are depressed and our minds troubled, nothing so jars our feelings as the apparently defiant indifference of Nature. The grey gloom of the previous night seemed in harmony with that dismal sight which had shaken the nerves of poor Edna, and from which she had by no means recovered. Now, the blue, rejoicing sky and the golden glow of morning bathing the lawn and garden in splendour, seemed a bitter mockery of the recent tragedy. The young girl's eyes wandered off from the smooth turf and dewy flowers to the arbour that covered the boat-house, and the recollection of the past night was so vivid that, for a moment, she closed her eyes as if to shut out some palpable object. Then she drew out from a little silk bag, which she had made for it, the miniature which she longed to authenticate as her mother's picture, and recalled the circumstances by which she had become possessed of it. The conviction which had flashed on her mind in the boat-house last evening had been gathering strength through the wakeful, restless night, that the woman who gave her the picture at Guines, and the wanderer found dead in the boat-house, were one and the same person. Those worn, cobwebbed-looking garments, and that dusty crape head-gear, seemed unmistakable. The rigid outline of the features, too, presented a ghastly resemblance, as far as Edna could trust her memory.

"Who could this woman be?" would be the oft-recurring inquiry. This she concluded the inquest would discover. How could this person have become possessed of the miniature—or in what way known her mother?—or was the tale all a delusion, or an imposture?

These and countless other questions kept rushing through her mind, until, in sheer weariness and desire to compel her thoughts in some more wholesome channel, Edna undid the bolts of the half-glass door that led into the little balcony at her chamber window, and descended the flight of outside steps into the garden, glad to pace up and down the terrace and cool

her feverish brow in the dowy freshness of the morning air. Even while she was commanding herself to banish the memory that haunted her, her feet were seeking the track they had taken the previous night, and conducting her, as though she was walking in a dream, through the shrubbery towards the gate. As she drew near it a consciousness of her folly roused her. Perhaps the fact also that if she had meant to re-visit the scene of last night's incident, the gate thither was now strongly fastened, was a wholesome check. She turned back and retraced her steps through the shrubbery, where, on the soft mould, the footmarks of the men who had borne the lifeless outcast away were distinctly visible. She could not forbear looking at and tracing them. All on a sudden she stopped short; her foot had kicked aside a shred of that tattered dress, which had been still further torn by the dog, and whose details were so well remembered. Under this shred there was a bit of something of purple colour, nearly trodden into the earth. She stooped down and picked it out of the mould: it was an old oval leather case, of the same shape, and that might have been the outside cover of the miniature. Eagerly she touched the spring, and it flew open. An empty case? No, not exactly empty, for folded very small was a page of thin, flay, French note paper with writing on it. A mist gathered over her eyes a moment, for the very first line that met her gaze was, *"To my child, Edina!"* Hastily crushing the paper in her hand, the amazed reader fled away from the shrubbery as if pursued; looked up terrified at the windows of the house like a guilty creature, and hastily sought the seclusion of the arbour, where, sinking on a seat to recover composure, after a few minutes she returned to the task of reading the paper, whose beginning had so startled her.

If ever my daughter reads these lines, then the hand that wrote them will be cold, and this breaking heart at rest. I have sinned and suffered. Disobedience was my sin. If my father loved nothing else, he did once love me. Yes, he did. I disobeyed and deceived him, and he cast me off. Oh, my child! beware of disobedience—do not fall in this as your mother has. Be faithful as a daughter—true to first duties, as you would avoid the bitter, bitter lot that has been mine. How my weary spirit yearns for love! I have watched and waited near till my brain has reeled. God grant you may never know such grief as makes me cry, "Am I mad?" Ah, I think I must be. In distant Australia—over the wild ocean—back in Europe—everywhere my spirit has been with you, my child, to see you, and then to die.

Here the writing with ink ended; the rest was in pencil.

I have seen you, my own, my only one. Oh, it was too soon, the joy—the grief—both too much! But be good—be obedient. Keep this secret—pity me. Oh, my child! pity your—

The letter, which seemed to have been done at intervals, broke off rather than ended.

Edina read it again and again, in a stupor of amazement, her eyes taking note of the words, and gleaming their import; but her mind unable to realise the full meaning as it concerned herself. She turned the case over and examined it; some faded gilt letters, partially obliterated, were on the leather cover. With difficulty she made out a name—her mother's maiden name—"Christiana Graspington!"

(To be continued.)